leidžiantias abonentams susisiekti su visu pasauliu. Kuršių nerijoje prie Baltijos jūros šią vasarą poilsiaujan nemažai Lietuvos ir užsienio verslininkų - jiems toks ryšys labai aktualus.

UŽMEGZTI DIPLOMATINIAI RYŠIAI SU MAKEDONIJA. Kaip pranešė ELTAI Lietuvos URM Informacijos ir spaudos skyrius, liepos 11 dieną Lietuvos Respublika ir buvusi Jugoslavijos Respublika Makedonija (FYROM) užmezgė diplomatinius santykius. Makedonija - 99 valstybė, su kuria Lietuva užmezgė diplomatinius santykius.(V.P.)

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SWEDEN RECONFIRMS SUPPORT FOR BALTIC EU INTEGRATION

RIGA, Jul 14, BNS - Sweden will support Latvia and the other two Baltic states in their bid to join the European Union, Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen said Thursday at a press conference in Riga.

Sweden "will not be indifferent" in case Latvia faces military threat but in case of a military conflict it will remain neutral and react through organizations like the EU, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, she said.

"Latvia can already be considered a full-fledged member at the EU negotiating table" after having signed an associate membership treaty, she said.

Latvian Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs, who met with his visiting counterpart during her two-day trip to Riga, said he asked for Swedish backing to an earlier ratification of the Euro Agreement.

Sweden could also help Latvia attain that its EU membership talks take place simultaneously with talks on Malta and Cyprus, scheduled six months after an intergovernmental conference of 1996, said Birkavs.

The Swedish foreign minister failed to say exactly when Latvia could become a full-fledged member of the EU.

Birkavs claims Latvia could get ready for the new status in five to 10 years. The EU has made a political decision to speed up acceptance of the Baltic states, he noted.

Among other Swedish assistance plans, the foreign minister mentioned the participation of Swedish experts in legislation and harmonization of the legislative process in Latvia.

Birkavs said he hoped that Sweden will join a conference on Latvia's EU integration, planned for Sept. 14 and 15 in Riga.

The foreign ministers also touched on several bilateral economic projects, like the preliminary project of a cellulose plant, new labor protection rules for forestry workers, computerization of Latvia's labor market and medicine certification systems.

Improved cooperation between the defense and interior ministries of both countries in combatting illegal migration and organized crime would promote the regional safety, the ministers agreed.

They decided to start preparing a bilateral agreement on readmission of illegal migrants.